

FARMER JOHN'S SOLILOQUY.

I must as well acknowledge, 'tain't no use o' beatin' round. I've done a heap o' thinkin', growin' up this faller. An' suthin's been a painin' an' actin' me like an'—

I reckoned 'twas dyspepsia or malarial exosm' in. At last I got my dander up, an' to myself, sez I. The biggest fool in nature is him that tells himself lies.

I've been lettin' on 'tis malarial, an' my stomach, when I know it's my conscience that's a hurtin' an' worryin' me so.

I've been a shirkin' this here thing for thirty year or more. An' I orto have this shakin' up an' settin' down afore.

I've been honest, far as payin' goes, not a penny due. But the kind o' chestn' that I done was the kind that didn't show.

My mind goes back to Hanner, when I fetched her here a bride—

No apple-blossom was sweeter, an' she nussed to my side.

Like she thought she had a right to, an' could treat me without fear.

For the love I never listed at for more'n thirty year.

There was cherrin', bakin', bilin', there was nussin' an' the rest.

From long afore the sun riz till he slumbered in the west.

An' when the rest of us was done, an' lollin' round on cheers,

Hanner was recuperatin' with her needle an' her shears.

But when the life was ebbin' from that faithful, patient heart.

I had to face the mus'—I hadn't done my part; An' I couldn't help a thinkin', watchin' out that weary life.

That there's other ways o' killin' 'cept a pistol or a knife.

It sounds like sacrilege, but I knew just what she meant.

As I whispered, "Fly to meet me when my airily life is spent—"

"I'm tired, John, so tired, but I've ahusd when my best."

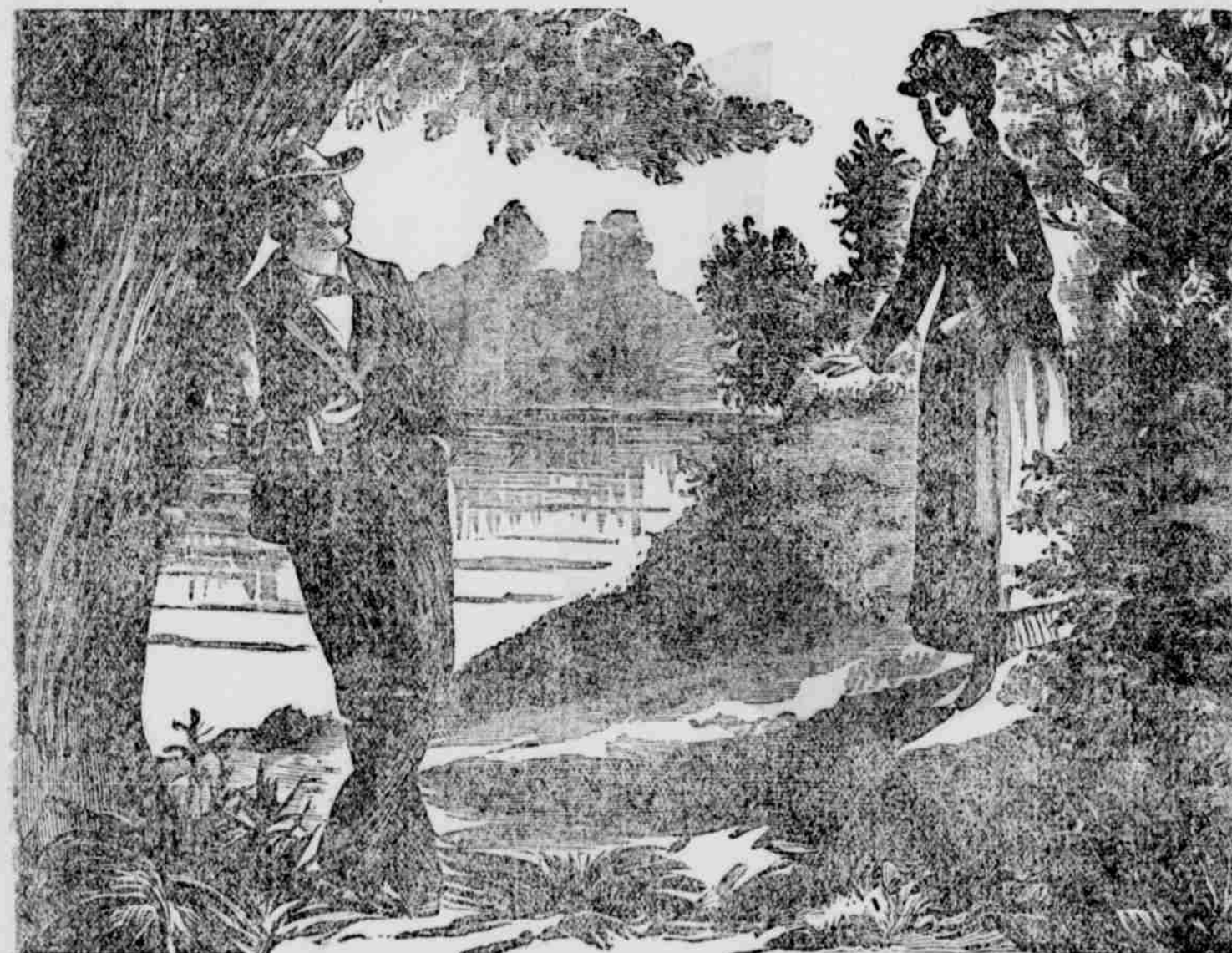
An' I may feel more like flyin' when I've had a spell o' rest.

—Amy Hamilton, in Exchange.

ONE OCTOBER MORNING.

A Story of Old Quebec.
BY WM. H. S. ATKINSON.

IN the Province of Old Quebec, deep-hidden in the recesses of the mountains, lies the little out-of-the-world village of Jacques Cartier, with its tiny church, its weather-worn wooden crucifixes, and its short-petticoated housewives. At Jacques Cartier I resided for many years, although it was a very poor place for a doctor, and I grew to really love the sleepy old place, together with the simple, genial French people and half-breeds who lived there. Very little variation entered into the



Marie Gambier soon learned to love him.

monotonous life of those quaint folks in the St. Emile Valley, and yet I believe I was able, while among them, to study a good many phases of human nature and many of the strange workings of human passions.

Detached from the rest of the village, there used to be, and is now, for aught I knew to the contrary, a long, low, vine-covered house, not much larger than a cottage. An old-fashioned garden, full of the sweet flowers somewhat despised by modern horticulturists, lies all around it, divided from the orchard at the back by a struggling fence and a merry little stream of clear water. The whole place gives one impressions of sweetness and freshness, though hardly of trimness.

They would require, this garden and orchard, the constant care of two strong men to render them as neat as the lawns and flower-beds of city lots, whereas the sole attention they received, when I knew them, was the very unmethodical care of pretty Marie Gambier. Well, Marie had more important work to do than gardening. She kept house for her father, and for the girl that meant cooking, cleaning, sewing, and sometimes even milking.

Old Paul Gambier was the last of a long line of descendants of an ancient Paul Gambier, who had settled in Canada with the first of the French colonists, and although only imperfectly educated he prided himself on the fact that he was a gentleman who had never been obliged to work. It did not occur to him that, because he chose to exist upon a pittance three or four hundred dollars a year, a frail and slender wife had been hurried to her long rest; nor did he pause to consider that his daughter Marie, instead of being at the convent school and enjoying herself as young girls should, was growing up to succeed her mother as a household drudge and in total ignorance of all the accomplishments usually so dear to young ladies, even in the back townships of the slow French province.

Marie was very simple and very ignorant, but she possessed pleasant traits of character. All the dogs, cats, cows and horses in the village knew Marie Gambier, and in their several ways showed their appreciation of her kindly nature of them. Besides, Marie was very pretty, and in the mountains lived a strapping young Frenchman who was as ignorant of litera-

ture and the fine arts as Marie herself—a man who had never yet trodden a city pavement and who had never so much as beheld a fashion-bedecked dame. But he loved Marie—very, in his quiet, unassuming way he worshipped the girl. So, as he was about as good-looking as any of the boys within a horseback ride of Jacques Cartier, and as he drove a fairly good team and "owned land," Marie had promised to marry Jean Contellier, while the bobbed coiffs of the St. Emile Valley decided that it was a fitting match.

Yes, Marie was very pretty—and so thought a stranger who approached Jacques Cartier from the mountain-side one summer afternoon.

The girl was standing under one of the old gnarled apple-trees in the orchard. Such a lovely rounded form—even though it was only covered by an off-washed cotton dress—with the sunlight playing in gleams and flashes upon the bright brown hair and fair young face. As the stranger drew near he fully imbibed and thoroughly appreciated the beauties of the picture, for he was somewhat of an artist and he was alive to all things beautiful. But he was so much engrossed in the pleasant center-piece of the picture that he did not notice when a breeze from off the mountain struck the valley and lifted Marie's large, untrussed straw hat from the ground, blowing it right under the nose of his horse, nor was he prepared for the frightened plunge of the animal, who reared so suddenly as to instantly throw his proceperated rider. It was not much of a fall, but the stranger's leg was fractured, and Paul Gambier and his daughter carried the young man into their house, where I attended him in my professional capacity.

The stranger's name was Walter Penrith, a New York man, who had been traveling through the woods and valleys of Quebec in search of health and pleasure. He was wealthy, and when he discovered that he could not be moved from his couch for many weeks, he ordered luxuries of all kinds from the great metropolis, until the cottage home was piled to overflowing with rare books, wines, fruits, etc., while none but the finest cigars came for Monsieur Gambier's especial use.

Before long costly presents began to arrive for Marie, and—well, it was only an off-told tale. Not only were the presents brought to her upon Marie, but Penrith himself, who was, without doubt, one of the most fascinating men I ever met, brought his powerful personal magnetism into play, and Marie Gambier soon learned to love him. Yes, it was no dream or fancy on the girl's part; she loved Walter Penrith, and loved him truly. Indeed, she loved him so well, and for himself alone, that after she had known Penrith a month she would have cared for the man just as much had he never given her another present—had he suddenly become poorer than simple Jean Contellier, now thrust so far into the background of Marie's thoughts and affections.

As for Penrith, he was a man of the ture and the fine arts as Marie herself—a man who had never yet trodden a city pavement and who had never so much as beheld a fashion-bedecked dame. But he loved Marie—very, in his quiet, unassuming way he worshipped the girl. So, as he was about as good-looking as any of the boys within a horseback ride of Jacques Cartier, and as he drove a fairly good team and "owned land," Marie had promised to marry Jean Contellier, while the bobbed coiffs of the St. Emile Valley decided that it was a fitting match.

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SACRED DANCE SEEN IN JAPAN.

Young Priestesses Conduct the Ceremony—Old, Historic Dress.
(From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.)

From a Kasuga gate the upper avenue of lanterns leads the way to the Wakamatsu shrine, dedicated to the early gods of the Shinto religion. Here the old custom of the sacred dance is kept up, and a group of young priestesses are waiting to repeat the measures danced by Utsune before the sun gods' cave in prehistoric times. The little priestesses are all between the ages of 9 and 12, as timid, gentle and harmless little things as the deer that often stray in and watch them. Their dress is the old, old costume of the imperial court, a picturesque lower garment or divided skirt of the brightest cardinal red silk, that half covers the white kimono, with square sleeves and pointed neck, filled up high with alternate folds of red and white. When they dance they wear over this loose kimono of white gauze, painted with the wistaria crest of the Kasuga temple, the front of the gauzy garment half covering the red skirt, and the back pieces trailing on the mats. Their faces are plastered so thickly with white paint that they lose all expression, and following the old fashion, their eyebrows are shaved, and two tiny black spots high up in the middle of their foreheads take their place. With lips heavily rouged, the countenance is more a mask than anything human. The hair is gathered together at the back of the neck and tied with loops of gold paper, and then, folded in soft white paper, allowed to hang down the back. Long hairpins, with clusters of wistaria and red camellia, are thrust across the top of the head, and fastened so that they stand out like horns over the forehead. In detail the costume is not pretty, but in its general effect it is singularly bright and picturesque.

One can have as many priestesses and as long a dance as he will pay for, and as soon as the money is handed over the two priests get into their ceremonial white gowns and high black hats, and, sitting before the ancient drum, chant, pound and blow on doteful pipes an accompaniment for the little dancers. The sacred dance is solemn enough, and each dancer has a fan and a bunch of bells, from which hang long strips of bright-colored silks. They advance, retreat, glide to right and left, raise their fans, shake their sacred baby rattles, and with few changes in the measure repeat the same figures and movements for a certain length of time. If one pays more money they continue repeating the same thing, and the priests can wait the endless accompaniment by the hour. To us the dance is simply a curious and picturesque custom, but one should see the faces of the devout old pilgrims, who have hoarded up their money for months and often years for the trip, to know something of what it means to them. It is really pathetic to see their faces glowing and their eyes almost filled with tears at their satisfaction with the fine spectacle that is so rare an event in their lives, and which crowns their summer pilgrimage to the old shrines of their faith.

Alligators.

The alligator is a strange, unsightly object, living in the swamps and marshes of the warmer parts of America only, for it is not known in other countries, although it resembles the crocodile, which is found in many tropical climes. The alligator is smaller, lives in swamps and marshes, and often basks in the sun on the sands, while the crocodile's element is the water. The back of the alligator is covered with what might be called a coat of mail, for the thick, bony covering looks like plates of metal, the points projecting from it. On the under part of the body, however, is the peculiar skin of which pocket-books, slippers, and many useful articles are made.

There is also an oil extracted from them, which burns well in lamps, and the flesh has been used by Indians for food.

Although they are classed with the family of crocodiles, they differ from them in the formation of their heads, which are smaller and flatter. They live chiefly on fish, but also eat animal food, and at times are fierce, for they have been known to chase and attack men while swimming and bathing.

The alligator lays her eggs, twenty and often over that number, in the mud, and leaves them for the heat of the sun to hatch, but keeps constant watch over them to protect them from harm and keep them from being destroyed. The creatures vary in size from three to sixteen or eighteen feet in length, and the tails are nearly if not as long as the bodies. There is great strength in the tails, and it is with them and the partly webbed feet that they propel themselves through the water, and with the tail they easily overturn a canoe or small boat.

Many are found in Florida and other parts of the South, and as they lie on the bank of a river, hidden partly by the thick moss and foliage, they look like a log or trunk of a fallen tree, so motionless are they at times.

In the colder weather they are torpid, and appear so lifeless that it seems as if they must be dead, yet when warmed by the sun they very soon regain their animation. They are very curious creatures, and their general aspect not by any means prepossessing, but on examination there is beauty in the peculiarly marked skin and the armor which they wear.—*Vick's Magazine.*

Religion of the Romanians.

The religion of the Romanians is a mass of superstitions, which under the name of Christianity dominates their entire existence. Indeed, one author has said: "The whole life of a Wallach is taken up in devising talismans against the devil." A Romanian uncovers his head on passing a wayside cross, but he makes an equally deep salutation to the rising sun; he goes to church on Sunday, but it is doubtful whether he does not regard Friday, which is dedicated to Venus, as the holier of the two. The orthodox Romanian regards any one who buries a corpse without placing a coin in the hand as a pagan. The Romanian churches, in contrast with the cold, bare-looking churches of the Saxons, present a most attractive appearance, for they are covered with artistic decorations, and are a mass of soft, warm coloring.

"Not a corner," says Mrs. Gerard, "but from which starts up some grinning devil, not a nook but reveals some choleric-looking saint, till we feel ourselves to be surrounded by a whole pageant of celestial and diabolical beings, only distinguishable from one another by the respective fashions of their headgear, horns or halo, as the case may be. These horned devils play a very important part in every Romanian church, where usually a large portion of the walls is given up to representations of the pangs of eternal punishment. The poor Romanian peasant, whose life is often as wretched and struggling as hardly to deserve that name, seems to derive considerable consolation from anticipation of the day when the tables are to be turned and the hitherto despised poor shall receive an eternal crown."—*New York Sun.*

Safe to Employ.

Bank Official—You say you would like a position as cashier?
Applicant—Yes.
B. O.—Do you belong in the city?
A.—No, I've come from Canada.
B. O.—Is that your native place?
A.—Yes.
B. O.—Why did you leave it?
A.—My doctor's advice.
B. O.—Climate too severe?
A.—Yes.
B. O.—Ever intend to go back?
A.—Never—it would be certain death.
B. O.—Eureka! You are just the man we want. Report in the morning and be installed as cashier.—*Yankee Blade.*

The oldest and largest tree in the world is a chestnut near the foot of Mount Etna. The circumference of the main trunk is 212 feet.

FRESH FROM THE BURS.

The storm-king, strange to say, never holds the reins when he is driving.—*Time.*

JENKINS writes to his girl in the apartment house as his suite heart.—*Boston Commercial Bulletin.*

"I did not think you would be so hard with me," exclaimed the shark, when he bit the anchor.—*Ocean.*

WHAT long legs the man must have who can attend to his business with one foot in the grave.—*Atchison Globe.*

A MACHINE for pressing hops has been invented. America is the home of the hop-press.—*Texas Siftings.*

THE novelty of having a baby in the house is like the trade mark on a cake of soap; it soon wears off.—*Atchison Weekly Globe.*

LECTURES on the North Pole are generally slow. The speaker does not seem able to warm up to the subject.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

"PHYSICIAN, heal thyself!" is an injunction promulgated centuries ago, and now some of the older practitioners are pretty well healed.—*Idea.*

THERE never was a day, even in New England, so fine and beautiful that some one couldn't spoil it with a wretched pun.—*Somerville Journal.*

LAWYER (to little boy)—Where did you learn to tell such outrageous lies? Boy—I passed your office one day when the window was open.—*Arcola Record.*

THEY were talking about the Atlantic cable. "It reminds me of a good egg," he said. "A good egg?" "Why, yes; being so successfully laid."—*Ocean.*

"CARRIE" writes to know "What is the most attractive way of wearing the hair?" On the head, Carrie; and be sure it is pinned tight.—*Burlington Free Press.*

HE—How beautiful Miss Arrow-smith's back hair is! She—Yes. Much prettier than her front hair. I wonder she didn't get it all at the same place.—*Harper's Bazar.*

REMBRANDT SMITH—Hello, old fellow, how are you prospering? Painting many portraits now? Velasquez Jones—Well, yes; I'm getting a head pretty well nowadays.—*Boston Post.*

A GUEST at a Western hotel raised a row because there was no cover on his bed and he wouldn't be quiet until the landlord was compelled to cover him with a revolver.—*Washington Post.*

EDISON has no doubt got a good thing in his phonograph, but we can name a dozen women off-hand who can give it twenty-five minutes' start and discount it without a stop.—*Detroit Free Press.*

AN experienced person says that when a young man attempts to kiss his girl, and she says "Don't," that is the time he should "Don't"—several times, if not more. She will not be pleased if he doesn't.

"I hope you appreciate the fact, sir, that in marrying my daughter you marry a large-hearted, generous girl." "I do, sir" (with emotion); "and I hope she inherits those qualities from her father."—*Life.*

MR. BIBBER (next morning)—O! my head! It is a wonder that a man will put an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains. Mrs. Bibber—If that's what you did it for, Bibber, I think the enemy got badly left.—*Terre Haute Express.*

QUEVEDO—I see the savants are about to investigate the causes of yellow fever in the South. Miss Foote (Chicago)—How noble! But I don't remember to have met them. Are they a North Side family?—*Philadelphia Call.*

A FASHION writer tells how a woman may make herself look tall or short at will by regulating the waist of her dress. She will not look short if she wears a long waist; but it may have been noticed that big waste in woman has made husbands look "short."

LONDON, with a population of over 5,000,000, has a death rate of 15.1 per 1,000 inhabitants, while the death rate of New York, with a population less than 2,000,000, is nearly double those figures. But there are no bobtail street cars in London.—*Norristown Herald.*

HERBERT—Really, Miss Edith, I am very sorry I kissed you. I didn't think what I was doing. It is a sort of temporary insanity. Miss Edith (pitifully)—If you ever feel any more such attacks coming on you had better come right here, where your infirmity is known, and we will take care of you.—*Judge.*

"CAN you tell me where the automaton chess player is?" asked a gentleman of an attendant at the Centennial Exposition. "Do yez-mean the figger that plays games by itself an' yez can't see anybody workin' it?" "Yes, that's what I mean." "Well, yez'd better wait a bit. He's gone out to dinner now."—*Merchant Traveler.*

WISDOM IN DISTICHES.

I. Wisely a woman prefers a lover to a man who neglects her.
II. This one may love her some day, some day the lover will not.
III. There are three species of creatures who when they seem coming are going. When they seem going they come—Diplomats, women and crabs.
IV. Pleasures too hastily tasted grow sweeter in fond recollection. As the pomegranate plucked green ripens far over the sea.
V. As the meek beasts in the garden came flocking for Adam to name them.
VI. Men for a little to-day crawl to the feet of a king.
VII. What is a first love for, except to prepare for a second?
VIII. What does the second love bring? Only regret for the first.
—*Norwalk State Journal.*

An Observant Youngster.

On a summer morning our little Lillie was walking with her aunt, and discovered a spider's web. She was delighted, and exclaimed, "Oh, see! here is a hammock for bugs."—*Christian Advocate.*

THE baton used by conductors of concerts is said to have been introduced into England by Spohrin 1820.

ONE pound of seed will yield about 10,000 asparagus stalks.